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HON. D. C. BLOOMER.

BY JOHN H. KEATLEY.

IT is impossible, almost, to estimate the services of the early pioneers of western Iowa. And we shall not attempt it in the case of the one whose name heads this article, but shall content ourselves with giving a brief abstract of the principal events of the life of a self-made man, whose energies have been greatly spent in his later years for the development of this portion of the state.

Among these pioneers is D. C. Bloomer, the subject of this sketch. He was born at Aurora, Cayuga county, in the state of New York, on the fourth day of July, 1816, of Quaker parents, which in great part accounts for his intense hatred of the institution of slavery, developed in after years by positive acts in aid of the emancipation of the slave. In 1823 he removed to Courtlandt county with his parents. In those days, what schools there were were very poor and of small account, and of course he gained but little aid from their attendance. In 1828 he removed to Seneca, N. Y., in the meantime attending such common schools and academies as were within his reach. At an early age he acquired a fondness for books, but books were scarce, and what money he earned at ten years of age he spent for these and walked seven miles to make the outlay. He also had a peculiar fondness for the reading of newspapers. When eighteen years of age he became a school teacher, and for nearly three years continued in that profession. In 1836, before the advent of railroads, he visited Michigan, his mode of conveyance being canal boats, and steamers on Lake Erie. After his return home to New York, he commenced, in 1837, at Seneca Falls, the study of law. He had then only twenty dollars in his pocket, and was the owner of one

suit of clothes only, but by industrious and prudent habits, and by practice in the justices' courts, he was able to support himself until he was regularly admitted to the bar. In the spring of 1838 he was appointed clerk of the village in which he resided, at a salary that afforded him a comfortable living. This office he held for three years. The same year he became the editor of a Whig newspaper at Seneca Falls, and was connected in that capacity with the paper for fifteen years, rendering yeoman service in the cause of human freedom. During this period he spent a great deal of time in the interests of the whig party aside from his editorial labors — at no time, however, losing sight of his early Quaker teachings, that American slavery was a cruel wrong that sooner or later must be removed. As a public, political speaker, he had few superiors. His voice was clear, his diction concise and accurate, and his manners affable and attractive.

In 1841 he was appointed a commissioner in bankruptcy, under the bankrupt act of congress then in existence. From 1841 to 1849 a large and lucrative practice in his profession as a lawyer rewarded his industry, when he was appointed, by President Taylor, the postmaster of Seneca Falls. This place he held for four years. At the expiration of Fillmore's presidency, Mr. Bloomer removed to Mt. Vernon, Ohio, and for a year edited the *Western Home Visitor*, a literary journal of extensive circulation and influence. In 1855 the western fever took hold of him, and, like many other men who with foresight appreciated the future of western Iowa, he determined to make it his home. Locating that year in Council Bluffs, he at once embarked in the practice of the law and in the real estate and insurance business. He brought to Iowa his whig anti-slavery principles, and when the whig party made a wreck of itself, and the republican party in 1855 began to crystallize itself into an organization amid the obloquy of the majority of the people of the country, Mr. Bloomer and others organized republicanism in Pottawattamie county. In 1856 he again took

the editorial pen as editor of the *Chronotype*, the first republican newspaper ever published in the state west of the Des Moines river. In 1856 he served as an alderman of the city. In 1857 he was the republican candidate for mayor of Council Bluffs, and was defeated. In 1858 he was the republican candidate for county judge, and defeated, and in 1859 ran as a republican for representative, and was defeated. In 1861 he was appointed receiver of the United States Land office, and held the place twelve years, and until the office was abolished by the removal of the records of the district to Des Moines. In 1860 he was elected a member of the state board of education, and served in that capacity until the board was abolished by law. For nine years he held the office, electorally, of president of the school board of Council Bluffs, and during that time, and under his personal supervision, all the school houses of which the city is so justly proud were built. Twice, after the city had attained a population of more than ten thousand inhabitants, he was elected its mayor.

During the war of the rebellion Mr. Bloomer was the president of the Union League of Council Bluffs, and took an active part, in energy and money, in the raising of troops for the suppression of the insurrection. A quarter of a century ago he became a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which he has ever since been a consistent, conscientious, and devout member. In 1840 he married Amelia Jenks, a lady of estimable character, of more than ordinary talent and education, and who still lives to bless the home of a husband who has devoted a long life to the happiness of others. We may, perhaps, find time to give a sketch in these ANNALS of the wife of Mr. Bloomer, who has for thirty-four years shared his fortunes and misfortunes, and who has assisted in frontier life, in making western Iowa what it is to-day. This happy couple are without offspring of their own, but, through adoption, have assumed and faithfully discharged the duties devolving upon parents.

The life of Mr. Bloomer has been one of busy activity. As a prominent member of the ^VOdd Fellows, his pen has for years contributed to its best literature, and even now, as we write, he is a contributor to these ANNALS, and an editor of a local journal of wide influence. A sincere Christian, an honest, candid, industrious citizen, who knowing his duty, is fearless in the discharge of it, is the man whom all who know delight to honor as D. C. BLOOMER.

^VWEST POINT WEDDINGS.

^VBY HAWKINS TAYLOR, WASHINGTON, D. C.

YOUR account of a wedding on the frontier puts me in mind of one of my own experiences in splicing a couple—for you must know that I have been constable, justice of the peace, alderman, and mayor, but never president. In 1836, ^VDavid Penrod came to ^VLee county and took a claim in the timber a mile south of ^VWest Point. He came from Johnson county, Illinois. His business in Illinois was that of a hunter, the game being deer, turkey, and hog. As the country settled up, hog hunting was most profitable, and his table was oftener served with pork than venison. Unfortunately, some meddlesome persons complained to the grand jury about his hog hunting. Some of his friends being on the jury, they posted him of the charge, which made him so indignant that he left the state, and left it without being particular in the manner of going. He brought with him to Iowa a dog, a gun, a wife, and two daughters, and built on his claim a small log shanty, dirt floor, clap-board roof, no loft; he had two beds, supported on two poles, one end

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